photographs of human-related scenes occur throughout the book. Only one shows a natural scene (foraging terns, pp. 182-183). A map in the front matter illustrates the Eastern Shore and the islands.

The meat of the book consists of 22 passages, letters, and published articles written by 21 authors (2 by Howard Pyle). The first passages tells of victims of a shipwreck in 1650 that had to endure extreme weather and cannibalism. The eastern wolf is mentioned in this one. We learn that sheep and cattle were introduced in the early 1800s to graze freely on the natural grasses on Smith Island. Robert E. Lee, a second lieutenant at the time, visited Smith Island in the spring of 1832 and described in a letter to his father some aspects of its ecology, as well as the large number of ticks he brought back. The wild horses of Chincoteague and Assateague figure prominently in two sections. Shipwrecks, life-saving crews, the towns on Cobb and Hog islands, hurricanes and northeasters, the shorebird and waterfowl hunting, and the fishing figure prominently in many stories. The writing is highly variable, as one might expect in such a collection of works taken from over 300 years of style. I found the most exciting and poignant reading in a passage from a journalist about the life-saving crew and a young local man who saved passengers from a wrecked ship off Cobb Island in 1894. A similar piece of masterful writing was the selection by the ornithologist O.S. Pettingill, Jr. who honeymooned on Cobb Island just before the famous August Storm of 1933 that completely overwashed the island and caused the death of George Cobb, the last inhabitant. The last two chapters cover the period leading up the acquisition of many of the islands by The Nature Conservancy and the establishment of the Virginia Coast Reserve.

There is much natural history in these passages but one has to hunt for it. The fact that Assateague and Chincoteague were completely overwashed with sea water in 1821 and Cobb Island in 1933 made me wonder whether populations of the terrestrial amphibians, reptiles, small mammals, and invertebrates were extirpated at that time. Did they recolonize the islands or were some able to survive and produce the decendants that now occur there? Of personal interest, I learned on page 88 how diamondback terrapins were collected and prepared for dinner in 1878. However, I was appalled at the immense slaughter of the shorebirds and their eggs for food and feathers that took place for many decades.

Unfortunately, readers will have to hunt for the information on their group of interest in this book by reading or scanning every page. The index, which should lead us to appropriate passages about natural flora and fauna, is dismally lacking in natural history entries. There are only a few entries like "mosquitoes" and "ticks" under "insects" and "oysters" under "fishing." There is not one entry for the common or scientific name of any species or even the more encompassing groups like waterfowl and turtles. Thus, the book's organization renders it far less useful than it could have been for people interested in natural history.

In other respects, the hardback version of the book is well constructed and attractive. The font size is reasonable; even I can read it well with my low-powered glasses. Left and right-hand margins remain consistent throughout but the top and especially bottom margins vary substantially. Lower margins vary from a half inch to over an inch from the bottom of the page.

I found this book to be useful for additional background on the nature of the barrier islands, insights into how their human inhabitants have altered their landscapes, and a glimpse of the forces of nature that shapetheir physical structure. We are all fortunate that these jewels in the basket of biological wealth contained within Virginia are now protected for the long term by The Nature Conservancy. Read this book for the history and dynamics of these incredible places. Curtis Badger summed it up for many of us who have visited wild places such as these: "The most important discoveries we make are those not found in field guides and scientific literature. Like belief in the supernatural, the islands force us to use our imagination to see beyond the horizon, to see beyond the barrier of years to a world that once existed here and that someday will return."

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Obituary

William S. Woolcott

William Starnold (Bill) Woolcott, Jr. (14 April 1922-18 April 1998) was professor emeritus of biology at the University of Richmond. He was on the faculty of UR from 1955 until his retirement in 1992. Bill was from Tennessee, served in the US Navy in World War II, and graduated with a degree in biology from Austin Peay State University in 1947.

He earned a master's degree in 1948 from George Peabody College, now part of Vanderbilt University, and then taught for four years at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee. He obtained his Ph.D. from Cornell University in 1955 where he worked under the renowned ichthyologist Edward Raney. At UR, Bill specialized in ichthyology and taught graduate seminars and courses in vertebrate natural history, vertebrate

morphology, general biology, and a variety of related subjects. He was awarded the distinguished educator award by the University and the endowed Kuyk Chair in 1980. He coordinated the graduate program in biology for many years and indeed kept the graduate program alive when there were efforts to abolish it. Bill died of complications derived from a long fight with cardiovascular problems starting with an aneurysm in the mid-1970s.

Bill amassed a large collection of freshwater fishes, most of which were from central Virginia, that was housed at UR until his retirement. The collection is now part of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science fish collection in Gloucester Point. Bill's primary interest was systematics and morphology of fishes. Most of his post-graduate work was with students. Eugene Maurakis worked with him in the 1970s when Bill and others obtained National Science Foundation and Virginia Power funding to study the fishes of the James River. Gene worked with Bill off and on for several years and most recently they collaborated on several projects. These include several papers on the systematics of fishes of the southeast and a professional 25-minute video entitled Phylogenetic Systematics now used by several museums and universities around the world. Of his 60 or so papers, most dealt with fishes, and most were based on populations and collections from Virginia. He published one paper on reproduction in scarlet snakes and two with me, one on red-backed salamander ecology and another on brown water snake reproduction. The latter was based on a thesis by David White directed by Bill and me. Bill was most at home directing research for graduate and senior undergraduate students.

Bill was a member of the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, the Society of American Zoologists, the Virginia Academy of Science, and the Association of Southeastern Biologists. He participated actively in the latter two societies where he would insist that his students present the results of their research.

Bill Woolcott is survived by his wife of nearly 50 years, Betty, two daughters, and two grandsons. His legacy will continue in the students he taught that have gone on to become academic biologists and professionals in other areas of science.

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Correction

In *Banisteria* Number 10, the last sentence of the first paragraph of the article by Stinson (1997:28) on *Orconectes virginiensis* should read: "But after searching various maps, other printed references, and communicating with several individuals, I became convinced that the type locality of *O. virginiensis* as described by Hobbs does not exist and that a revision of the type locality of this species is in order."

Reports

1. Report of the Secretary/Treasurer

The following members of the executive committee were in attendance for the 24 January meeting at Hampden-Sydney College, Hampden-Sydney, VA: Michael Kosztarob, Anne Lund, Richard Neves, Richard Hoffman, Steve Roble, Norm Fashing, and Joe Mitchell. (Barry Knisely was unable to attend.) The meeting was presided over by Richard Neves.

Funds on hand at the meeting date were $4,795.85.
Business items adressed:
1. Suggestions were discussed for improving membership. Roble and Mitchell would look into the idea of a brochure to advertise the Society.
2. Shenandoah Valley Sinkhole Pond Symposium was announced as scheduled for September. There was a discussion of special issue of *Banisteria*.
3. There was a discussion of changing the cover of *Banisteria*. Black and white photos will be considered.
4. Page charges were discussed if an author is not a member. Ten dollars a page if author is not a member or one author has to be a member for no charge. Non-member will receive a copy of the journal.
5. Replacing Vice President of the Society was discussed. Neves was to contact possible candidates.
6. Continuing as section of Virginia Academy of Science was discussed.
7. Web page was considered.
8. Hoffman proposed a questionnaire for the next issue of *Banisteria*, concerning such issues as separating from VAS and field trips for the Society.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Lund
Secretary/Treasurer

2. Report of the President

I assumed the position of President this year upon the